



MORGAN NICK
AMBER ALERT
FIELD OPERATIONS MANUAL

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SECOND EDITION



MORGAN NICK AMBER ALERT SYSTEM

FIELD OPERATIONS MANUAL

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WE WILL NOT FORGET . . .

It all began very innocently. Yet, what happened on June 9th, 1995 changed our lives forever.

Families and friends gathered to enjoy the springtime evening in Alma, Arkansas and the fellowship of a hometown baseball game. Among those in the crowd were six-year-old Morgan Nick and her mother Colleen.

Children at the park, Morgan among them, moved to the shadows of the field to catch fireflies. It wasn't supposed to happen, but in a matter of minutes Morgan had disappeared.

While the search for Morgan has never stopped, her story and spirit continue to remind us everyday of the precious gift there is in the life of a child and the responsibility we must accept to protect those young lives.

To Morgan and all the missing children everywhere, we dedicate this mission and our service.



P R E F A C E

The ***Morgan Nick Amber Alert System*** is a cooperative project among participating Arkansas law enforcement agencies working together with more than 250 Arkansas radio and television stations, other news mediums, and a multitude of public and private partners.

With the Arkansas State Police serving as the coordinator for system operations, the *Morgan Nick* Amber Alert System provides to law enforcement agencies across the state an instantaneous line of communication with the public that can rapidly disseminate information about the disappearance and search for missing and/or endangered children or minors.

However, with every call requesting activation of the *Morgan Nick* Amber Alert System comes the responsibility to quickly evaluate the facts of the case and determine whether the circumstances of the disappearance meets the criteria set forth in the policies contained within this manual.

The *Morgan Nick* Amber Alert System is not designed nor intended to be utilized in every incident. Specifically, the system is designed for the cases where there is substantial evidence or a known threat of danger or criminal intent directed toward the missing child and the immediate notification of the public will enhance the chances that the child will be safely recovered.

When a local law enforcement agency first receives a report of a missing child and begins to consider the use of the *Morgan Nick* Amber Alert System, a department commander should immediately contact the Arkansas State Police Criminal Investigation Division office in their area. An Arkansas State Police Special Agent will assist with the threat assessment.

*A list of telephone numbers for each ASP/CID office and the ASP Highway Patrol Troop offices is located inside the back cover of this manual.



Following a case assessment process after receiving a request of system activation, local authorities will be asked to provide the Arkansas State Police with as much descriptive information as possible about the victim, any known suspect information, known travel information, and victim or suspect photographs. The information and photographs will be transmitted to Arkansas State Police Headquarters at Little Rock where remote access equipment linked to the national Emergency Alert System (EAS) may be activated to relay the information to the public through local radio and television broadcasts.

The Arkansas State Police will make every reasonable effort to ensure the specified criteria has been met or exceeded before activating the EAS. The Arkansas State Police acknowledges the potential for detriment to the *Morgan Nick* Amber Alert System resulting from unwarranted utilization of the EAS or any erroneous information disseminated through the alert system. It will be the responsibility of the Arkansas State Police to take all necessary precautions to authenticate information before it is disseminated and limit any repeated radio and television program interruptions. Strict criteria set forth within the *Morgan Nick* Amber Alert Field Operations Manual shall be applied to the consideration given by Arkansas State Police commanders when they are requested to authorize activation of the alert system.



Policy – *Morgan Nick* Amber Alert System Level I EAS Activation Criteria & Procedure

The following list of activation criteria must be considered initially by the local law enforcement agency commander requesting activation of the *Morgan Nick* Amber Alert System (MNAA). An Arkansas State Police commander shall also review the same criteria before initiating activation of the system.

Local Law Enforcement Agency Minimum Reporting Criteria

- 1) The age of the child** – Persons who are subjects of the alerts must be less than 18 years of age.
- 2) Threat assessment** – Collect the necessary statements and evidence necessary to assess the likelihood that the missing infant, child or minor may be facing imminent harm or death.
- 3) Time element** – The amount of time that has elapsed between the last known sighting of the missing or abducted infant, child or minor and the actual time of the report to a law enforcement agency must be factored into a decision to activate a Level I, EAS/MNAA.
- 4) Witness information** – Consider the reliability and competency of witness information.
- 5) Parental or guardian disputes** – Every effort must be made to determine if any parental or guardian dispute has played some role in the disappearance of the missing infant, child or minor.
- 6) Collective evidence and statements** – The decision whether to authorize a Level I activation will be based on the collective evidence and statements provided to law enforcement officers that would lead investigators to believe there is a credible evidence of an abduction and/or the threat the infant, child or minor may be in imminent danger, facing serious injury or death.



If in the opinion of the on-duty local law enforcement commander the preceding criteria (a–f) have been met, officials of the department should contact the Arkansas State Police to seek activation of the Level I alert notification system.

The following checklist will assist the local law enforcement commander in expediting the alert process:

- ✓ Contact an ASP/CID Special Agent to respond to your agency to assist and facilitate the review of information and activate the *Morgan Nick* Amber Alert System.
(See appendix of this manual for a listing of contact telephone numbers.)
- ✓ Have on-hand in your department file the *Morgan Nick* Amber Alert forms. The forms can be copied from this manual, or obtain from the nearest Arkansas State Police Criminal Investigation Division Company Office, or online through the Arkansas State Police web site, www.asp.arkansas.gov
- ✓ A police chief, sheriff or authorized on-scene local agency commander must complete the *Morgan Nick* Amber Alert System initial reporting form, sign the document and e-mail or transmit the form by facsimile to Arkansas State Police, Troop A Communications Center (501 618-8106).
- ✓ Obtain a good quality photograph of the infant, child or minor that can be e-mailed to the Arkansas State Police for electronic distribution. If your department does not maintain 24-hour access to photographic scanning equipment or Internet access, please contact your responding ASP/CID Special Agent for assistance.



Arkansas State Police Internal Operating Procedures

Before activation of the Emergency Alert System for a Level I Morgan Nick Amber Alert, an Arkansas State Police Criminal Investigation Division Commander shall consider the following:

***In the event the Arkansas division commander is unavailable, MNAA/EAS authorization will default upward through the department's chain of command.**

- 1) The pertinent information collected from the *Morgan Nick* Amber Alert Initial Reporting Form.
- 2) Any subsequent information obtained from the initial investigation process.
- 3) The applicable policies set forth within this manual.

Once an EAS/Level I MNAA has been authorized, the following procedures will occur:

- a) The Arkansas State Police Critical Incident Command Center (CICC) will be activated and staffed.
- b) Simultaneously to item a), ASP/Troop A Telecom operators will prepare from the MNAA initial report form a script to be used during the EAS announcement that will provide the public with descriptive information about the missing infant, child or minor and/or associated suspect and means of transportation. The announcement script is to include a telephone number associated with the CICC phone bank and local law enforcement of immediate jurisdiction that will be used to receive calls from the public relating to the missing infant, child or minor.
- c) With authorization of the appropriate division or staff commander, the Emergency Alert System encoder will be activated and information provided through the prepared announcement to the public relating to the missing infant, child or minor. The announcement will be



broadcast twice during the first hour and once every hour afterwards for not more than two hours or until such time that the missing infant, child or minor is located. Arkansas broadcasters may exercise their own discretion whether to repeat the broadcasts more frequently or limit further interruptions following the initial EAS activation.

- d) All information and investigative leads received at the CICC will be forwarded to the law enforcement investigative agency with immediate jurisdiction relating to the disappearance of the individual.
- e) An invitation will be extended to the law enforcement agency with immediate jurisdiction in the case to place a representative of the department inside the ASP/CICC.
- f) Pursuant to applicable federal and state statutes, public release and/or confirmation of previous criminal history information, medical history or personal information relating to the missing person and/or suspect is prohibited.
- g) Should a lack of fresh investigative information or diminished investigative activity lead to a decision to close or reduce the hours of staffing the CICC during the course of an active alert, arrangement will be made for a pre-recorded message to be placed in queue for incoming telephone calls that will direct callers to the applicable ASP/CID Company involved in active disappearance case.

Critical Incident Command Center

The Arkansas State Police Critical Incident Command Center (CICC) will be activated during all Level I, *Morgan Nick* Amber Alerts.

The ASP/CICC, located within the department's administrative headquarters at Little Rock, was designed to handle multiple types



of law enforcement scenarios; however, emphasis was placed on providing technical features within the center that are conducive to a kidnapping or other types of cases in which there is an imminent threat to an infant, child or minor who has been abducted.



MORGAN NICK AMBER ALERT CRITICAL INCIDENT COMMAND CENTER – The call center (left) has the capability to handle 16 inbound phone calls simultaneously and information from the calls stored in the department's Rapid Start database. The command center (right) is reserved for case supervisors and department commanders and has independent data and telecommunication lines linked back to the on-scene case supervisors.

When activation of the CICC occurs in relation to a *Morgan Nick* Amber Alert, the Arkansas State Police will direct specific department administrators and staff to the center.

Reports received within the CICC relating to an active MNAA will be entered into the RAPID Start database designed for large scale investigations and each report will be assigned to the investigative team and shared with local authorities.

Likewise, it's crucial the investigative leads developed by a local law enforcement agency are forwarded to the CICC and entered into the Rapid Start database. In an effort to better facilitate the exchange of information between the local agency and the CICC, workspace inside the CICC will be reserved for a representative of the local law enforcement agency.



Policy – *Morgan Nick* Amber Alert System Level II e-mail Network Activation Criteria

If circumstances of the disappearance involving an infant, child or minor do not meet criteria to permit activation of a Level I, EAS notification, an alternate form of mass notification may be offered to a local law enforcement agency seeking assistance.

- (a) A police chief, sheriff or authorized commander of a local law enforcement agency should follow the guidelines set forth in the previous policy section (Level I alerts) relating to *Minimum Reporting Criteria*.
- (b) An authorized local law enforcement commander must complete the *Morgan Nick* Amber Alert System Initial Reporting Form, sign the document and electronically mail or transmit by facsimile the form to Arkansas State Police, Troop A Communications Center.
- (c) Authorization of a Level II alert is delegated to the agency's Criminal Investigation Division commander. In the event the division commander is unavailable, authorization of the alert system will default upward through the ASP chain of command beginning with the commander of the Criminal Investigation Division. If a Level II notification is authorized, the Arkansas State Police will disseminate information contained in the initial reporting form, along with a current photograph of the missing infant, child or minor through an electronic mail server maintained by the Arkansas State Police. Using an ASP e-mail template, a Troop A telecom operator will transcribe the necessary information from the initial reporting form onto the template. The photograph may be included as an attached file or sent separately as the photograph becomes available. The e-mail will be sent to a list of subscribers to include both print and broadcast newsrooms across the state.



- (d) The e-mail will contain information about the identity of the missing individual, description of the missing person and any possible suspect or person of interest to the law enforcement agency initiating the request. The e-mail message will contain the name of a person who will serve as a primary point of contact within the reporting law enforcement agency and a telephone number where the person can be contacted.
- (e) Notifications by e-mail using the *Morgan Nick Amber Alert System* criteria shall include a mandatory disclaimer in each transmission stating, ***“The following information has been provided to the Arkansas State Police by local law enforcement officers with immediate jurisdiction in this case and does not rise to the reporting level for activation of the Emergency Alert System, Morgan Nick Amber Alert Level I. The information contained in this advisory and any photographs that follow may be released at the discretion of any Morgan Nick Amber Alert subscriber. Inquiries should be directed to the local law enforcement agency that has requested the (Level II) alert.”***
- (f) Additional information developed from the continued investigation into the disappearance of an infant, child or minor may warrant reconsideration as to whether to activate the Level I, Emergency Alert System. The Criminal Investigation Division commander may upgrade a Level II Alert to a Level I, EAS activation.
- (g) Pursuant to applicable Arkansas statutes, release and (or) confirmation of criminal history information, medical history or personal information relating to the victim and (or) suspect is prohibited.



Morgan Nick Amber Alert System **Frequently Asked Questions**

Who can request a *Morgan Nick Amber Alert* to be issued?

Any Arkansas law enforcement agency may initiate the request (*See paragraph (c) of Policy – Morgan Nick Amber Alert System Level I EAS Activation Criteria*).

What responsibilities do parents of a missing infant, child or minor have following the request by local authorities to activate the *Morgan Nick Amber Alert*?

It is essential that parents or guardians in these matters make themselves available to local law enforcement investigators and Special Agents of the Arkansas State Police following the initial report of a missing infant, child or minor. A recent photograph (preferably digital or good quality glossy portrait style close-up print) will be needed for dissemination to other law enforcement agencies and news media organizations. An accurate and complete physical description of the missing individual along with information regarding the clothing being worn at the time of the disappearance will be necessary.

Who can authorize the activation of the *Morgan Nick Amber Alert System*?

Only the Arkansas State Police CID division commander or an individual who supersedes the commander within the agency's chain of command may authorize activation of a Level I, EAS announcement or Level II e-mail advisory.

Should the reporting criteria involving the disappearance of an infant, child or minor not rise to a Level I *Morgan Nick Amber Alert*, is there a method by which the news media and local law enforcement agencies may receive information about the missing person case?



An Arkansas State Police CID company commander may authorize the release of a Level II advisory disseminated from an e-mail list server maintained by the Arkansas State Police. The e-mail addresses of local law enforcement agencies, news media organizations and public agencies capable of re-broadcasting the advisory may be included on the list server.

Can a parent or guardian of a missing infant, child or minor independently request activation of the *Morgan Nick* Amber Alert System?

No. Local law enforcement agencies must first have the opportunity to gather information about the disappearance and determine whether the facts of the case meet the minimum criteria for activation of the alert system.

Notes:



Arkansas State Police – MNAA Reporting Form – Quick Check List - Map – Telephone Contacts



ARKANSAS STATE POLICE

ASP-XXX
(Rev. 1103)

Morgan Nick Amber Alert Initial Reporting Form

SECTION I (ID/TIME/LOCATION)			
(a) Full name of missing child			
(b) City or community where child was last seen			
(c) County where child was last seen			
(d) Day & date child was last seen			
(e) Exact time child was last seen		AM <input type="checkbox"/>	PM <input type="checkbox"/>
(f) Exact address where child was last seen			
(h) Known landmarks at or near location where child was last seen			
SECTION II (THREAT OF IMMINENT DANGER)			
(a) Is missing child believed to be in imminent danger?			
(b) Is there evidence the child was abducted?			
SECTION III (PERSONAL INFORMATION & DESCRIPTION)			
(a) Race or ethnicity & sex of missing child		Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Female <input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Color & style of hair		(f) Color of eyes	
(c) Complexion		(g) DOB	
(d) Height		(h) Weight	
(e) Description of clothing child was last seen wearing & any personal items in possession of the child			
SECTION IV (SUPPLEMENTAL)			
(a) Name & DOB of individual who may be with missing child			
(b) Description of individual who may be with missing child			
(c) Description of vehicle being driven by individual who may be with missing child			
SECTION V (INVESTIGATIVE AUTHORITY & CONTACT INFORMATION)			
(a) Name of local law enforcement agency making request for alert activation			
(b) Name of authorizing sheriff or police chief SIGNATURE OF SHERIFF/POLICE CHIEF OR AUTHORIZED AGENCY COMMANDER			
(c) 24/7 telephone number for call back from public			
THE FOLLOWING FIELDS ARE TO BE FILLED IN BY ASP TROOP A TELECOM			
(a) Responding CID S/A		(c) ASP supervisor authorizing alert	
(b) Log time initial report was received by ASP-Troop A		(d) Log time of alert activation	
NOTES:			

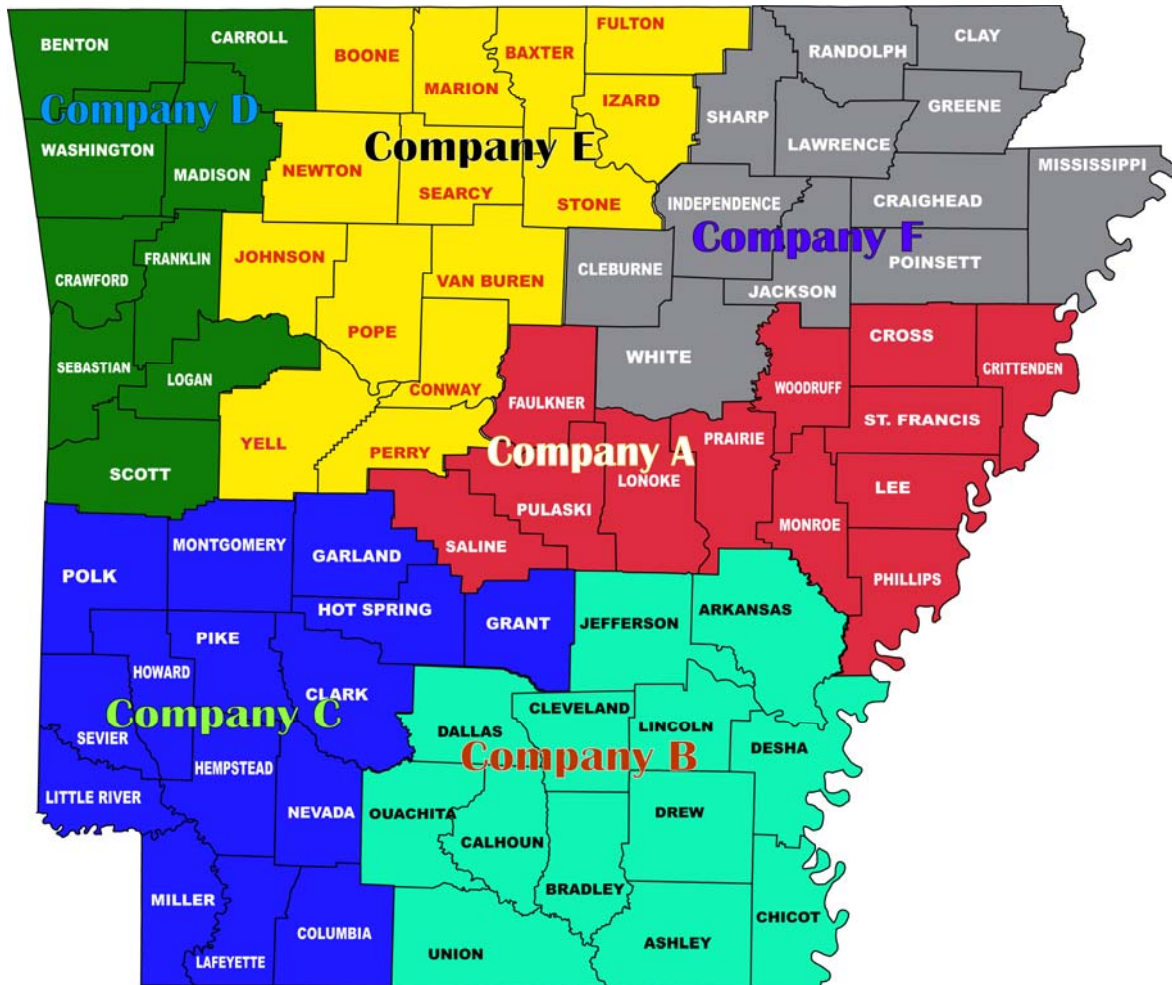


QUICK-CHECK LIST TO ACTIVATE THE MORGAN NICK AMBER ALERT SYSTEM

✓	Immediately contact your nearest Arkansas State Police Criminal Investigation Division Office (telephone listings on page 14 of this manual) and ask to speak to the company commander or on-duty supervisor. An ASP Special Agent will be dispatched to your office ...						
✓	Begin collecting current family photographs of missing child and/or suspect along with an accurate last known physical and clothing description of child and/or suspect and any vehicle information relating to the case ...						
✓	<p>As quickly as possible begin the process of completing the <i>Morgan Nick</i> Amber Alert Initial Reporting Form (see page 12 of this manual or download the form from the Arkansas State Police web site (www.asp.arkansas.gov)). This form must be sent by telephone facsimile or e-mail to Arkansas State Police Troop A Communications at Little Rock and reviewed by a department commander before activation of the alert can be initiated.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Troop A (voice)</td><td style="padding: 5px;">(501) 618-8100</td></tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Troop A (facsimile)</td><td style="padding: 5px;">(501) 618-8106</td></tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Troop A (e-mail)</td><td style="padding: 5px;">troopacomm@asp.arkansas.gov</td></tr> </table>	Troop A (voice)	(501) 618-8100	Troop A (facsimile)	(501) 618-8106	Troop A (e-mail)	troopacomm@asp.arkansas.gov
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Troop A (facsimile)	(501) 618-8106						
Troop A (e-mail)	troopacomm@asp.arkansas.gov						



ARKANSAS STATE POLICE CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION DIVISION COMPANY MAP



Criminal Investigation Division Company Offices

Company A (Little Rock)	(501) 618-8400
Company B (Pine Bluff)	(870) 850-8630
Company C (Hope)	(870) 777-8944
Company D (Fort Smith)	(479) 783-5195
Company E (Harrison)	(870) 741-2136
Company F (Jonesboro)	(870) 931-0043



Useful Contacts & Telephone Numbers

MORGAN NICK AMBER ALERT

CRITICAL INCIDENT COMMAND CENTER

(888) 828-8550

***STAFFED ONLY DURING ALERT ACTIVATION**

ASP Administrative Contacts

Major Tim K'Nuckles (501) 618-8200

Captain Cleve Barfield (501) 618-8850

Highway Patrol Communication Centers

Troop A (Little Rock) (voice) (501) 618-8100

Troop A (Little Rock) (facsimile) (501) 618-8106

Troop B (Newport) (870) 523-2701

Troop C (Jonesboro) (870) 935-7302

Troop D (Forrest City) (870) 633-1454

Troop E (Pine Bluff) (870) 247-1483

Troop F (Warren) (870) 226-3713

Troop G (Hope) (870) 777-4641

Troop H (Fort Smith) (479) 783-5195

Troop I (Harrison) (870) 741-3455

Troop J (Clarksville) (479) 754-3096

Troop K (Hot Springs) (501) 767-8550

Troop L (Springdale) (479) 751-6663

